(c) how many banks have been bought by SBI in different countries so far; and

(d) what has been the financial results of each of them for the last financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) State Bank of India (SBI) has acquired 62% stake in Indian Ocean International Bank Ltd. (IOIB), Mauritius, and 76% stake in PT Bank Indo Monex of Indonesia.

(d) As on 31.03.2007, IOIB, Mauritius has posted a net profit of USD 1.47 million, with balance sheet size of USD 181.91 million, while the PT Bank Indo Monex incurred a loss of USD 0.15 million which balance sheet size of USD 39.70 million. However, after taking over its management control by SBI, the PT Bank has posted a net profit of USD 0.13 million in the first half of the current year i.e. April - September, 2007.

Branches of Nationalized Banks in Ahmedabad

1563. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the total number of branches of Nationalized Banks in Ahmedabad City and District of Gujarat;

(b) how many requests/demands from "public for opening new branches of Nationalized Banks are pending; and

(c) what are the requirements and guidelines for opening new branches of Nationalized Banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) As reported by the Dena Bank, the Lead Bank of District Ahmedabad, there are presently 480 branches and 563 branches of Nationalised Banks functioning in Ahmedabad City and District Ahmedabad, Gujarat, respectively.

(b) and (c) In terms of Branch Authorisation Policy of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) updated on July 2,2007, banks have been given freedom to submit their Branch Expansion Plans to RBI for approval on annual basis. Banks have the freedom to select centres for opening of new branches, which they decide based on factors like the business potential, commercial viability, availability of infrastructure etc. and they are encouraged to open branches in underbanked centres. Further, there is no restriction on banks to serve the clients in any locality at a centre.

Requests are received from time to time from members of public for opening of new bank branches at various centres, which are forwarded to respective banks for necessary action. Banks decide such requests on merit and based on business potential and other factors at the particular entres.

Levy of rural development cess on agriculture produce

1564. SHRl C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) wether it is a fact that Government proposes to impose levy of rural development cess on agriculture produce;